



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

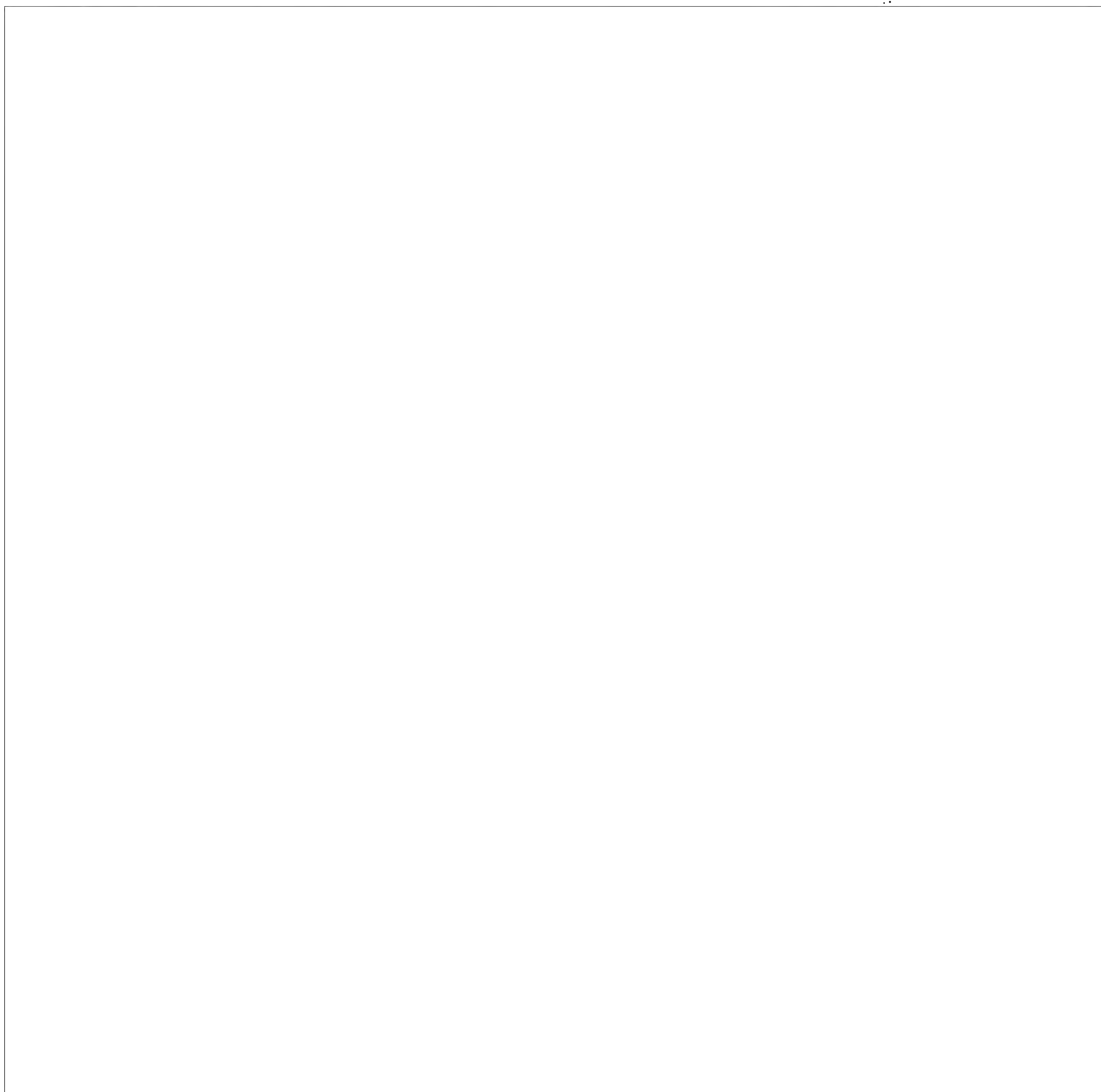
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4 DECEMBER 1964

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DAILY BRIEF
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1. South Vietnam

Premier Huong appears reassured by yesterday's statement of support from the military. He is aware that Buddhist opposition is solidifying but expresses confidence he can handle it. Buddhist leader Tri Quang is a masterful tactician, however, and will prove a formidable opponent to Huong.

2. Congo

The rebels are continuing to get outside military aid. [REDACTED]

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3. Laos

For the moment, government forces appear to be making progress in the attack on Phou Kout. (See map). The pattern of likely Pathet Lao military actions during the upcoming dry season in Laos is not clear, but some reaction is likely soon.

4. France

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5. Yemen

Republican-royalist negotiations have been shelved indefinitely by new UAR-Saudi Arabian disagreements over the future form of the Yemeni Government. A new republican government may soon be formed, without President Sallal. Scattered fighting is continuing.

6. Southeast Asia

Widespread speculation continues regarding a possible new departure in US policy toward Southeast Asia. A review of world reaction is at Annex 1.

7. Georgetown Speech

A roundup of foreign reactions to the President's speech yesterday at Georgetown University is at Annex 2.

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ANNEX 1

Current Reactions to US Policy in Southeast Asia

Recent world press, propaganda, and official reactions reflect anxiety that the US may be on the verge of new initiatives in Southeast Asia, especially in South Vietnam.

Moscow and Peiping

Both Moscow and Peiping have reacted to Ambassador Taylor's return to Washington by repeating warnings against any extension of hostilities beyond South Vietnamese borders. The Soviets are saying they could not "remain indifferent" to such a development, and the Chinese that they would "not stand idly by."

With regard to Laos, the Soviets still profess disinterest. As recently as 30 November, Gromyko said any new initiative concerning Laos ought to await the results of consultations among the three Laotian factions. Such consultations seem as far off as ever.

The West

There is little positive support in the non-Communist world for active involvement in South Vietnam. Gordon Walker told Undersecretary Ball on 30 November that he recommends a continuation of past US policy.

In Paris there is no change in the official view that neutralization of Vietnam is a realistic alternative. Although Bonn continues to profess support for the US position, there is no evidence that the West German \$375,000 offer of medical assistance to Saigon, promised last August, has been shipped.

The Italians remain detached. The Scandinavians and the Belgians continue to be reluctant to get involved.

The Neutralists

The attitudes of several developing countries, such as Algeria, Egypt, Pakistan, and Ghana, are predictably critical of the US. If anything, the current reactions of Ben Bella and Nkrumah are more extreme than the Chinese Communists'.

ANNEX 2

Reactions to the President's Georgetown Speech

West German straight reporting coverage today has been heavy, but there is so far little editorial comment. French coverage is light, and no comment is available from the UK. No reaction has been received from Latin America. Commentary available follows.

Paris

French reporters saw the speech as conciliatory to De Gaulle and as part of Washington's preparation for a meeting between the President and General de Gaulle. Premier Pompidou's speech today to a semi-official Franco-German conference in Paris, however, apparently did not refer to the Georgetown speech.

Bonn

West German commentators agreed that the most pleasing feature of the speech was its praise of the Federal Republic.

Moscow

TASS takes the view that the speech was directed at the "present crisis" in US relations with Western Europe. Moscow says the speech tried "to play down the depth of the disagreements in the North Atlantic bloc," and "strongly advertised" the MLF.

Prague

The domestic radio reported the speech as a "polemic" against De Gaulle's demand for a "so-called Europe on its own." The President's arguments on behalf of West Germany are "doubtful."

Warsaw

Preliminary press reaction suggests that the Poles were also most impressed by the "many laudatory words" about the Federal Republic.

Peiping

A Chinese commentary broadcast internationally in English called it a "gloomy" speech, intended to "maintain US domination over Western Europe." The speech referred to the sharpening disagreements within the Western camp, according to Peiping, as "the greatest threat the US is facing."